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ABSTRACT

Attention is focused on the increased emphasis which must be given to the study of oral communication in Florida schools. The program of speech instruction in Florida schools is outlined. It shall be directed toward training students to: (1) identify and develop relevant and useful oral language skills, (2) become efficient and critical consumers of oral discourse, and (3) recognize areas for continued oral language study. Each school system will provide, at the 9th or 10th grade level, and for a minimum of one semester, a basic speech course designed for all students. The principal objective will be student understanding of the process of communication as well as ability to incorporate these skills in every oral language situation. Each school will provide a minimum of one semester of instruction in speech for those students experiencing difficulty in school because of language patterns. Each school will provide advanced elective courses for oral language development. Cocurricular programs will also be offered. Courses in both speech and drama should be taught by individuals holding majors in speech from accredited universities and colleges. For the speech courses, the following facilities should be available: (1) a large classroom, (2) an auditorium and stage area, and (3) an oral communication laboratory. (CK)

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# ORAL *'florida in the...70's!'*

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DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

POSITION PAPER  
CONCERNING SPEECH IN FLORIDA  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The programs outlined in this position paper are consistent with guidelines established by the standards and accreditations of the Department of Education of the State of Florida and with the Florida Speech Association.

I INTRODUCTION

Students in Florida junior and senior high schools need to increase their understanding of oral communication. This position paper is issued jointly by the Florida Department of Education and the Florida Speech Association to focus attention on the increased emphasis which must be given to the study of oral communication in our schools.

The program of speech instruction in Florida schools shall be directed toward training students: 1) to identify and develop relevant and useful oral language skills; 2) to become efficient and critical consumers of oral discourse; and 3) to recognize areas for continued oral language study.

Efforts by language arts departments to design programs in terms of behavioral objectives for the 1970's reveal the lack of relevant study in the area of oral language. The obvious differences in written and oral language behavior clearly highlight the need for development of oral language for every student in the public schools.

The state, national, and international problems confronting our society demand citizens who have developed the ability to articulate

problems and solutions and who can evaluate, critically, the statements of others. Such citizens should also be capable of recommending means of minimizing communication problems and offering leadership in the application of inquiry, advocacy, and exposition to social problems.

This position paper is directed to outlining an appropriate minimum program of speech study for the public schools in Florida.

## II CURRICULAR NEEDS

A. Each school system will provide, at the 9th or 10th grade level, and for a minimum of one semester, a basic speech course designed for all students. Such a course will be aimed at student understanding of the ways in which each of the basic skills is applicable to all forms of oral communication. The principal objective will be student understanding of the process of communication as well as ability to incorporate these skills in every oral language situation. The fundamentals will include:

1. Communication models and roles;
2. Audience analysis and adaptation;
3. Research and data gathering for any oral activity;
4. Supporting material--use and evaluation of evidence;
5. Organization for different communicative situations;
6. Language, including aspects of oral style and semantics;
7. Delivery, including the role of voices and significant non-verbal communication;
8. Listening comprehension development;
9. Ethical concerns in oral language situations.

B. Each school will provide a minimum of one semester of instruction in speech for those students experiencing difficulty in school because of language patterns. No single characteristic is a greater handicap to a student than "culture bound" language habits. Such a course will attempt to have students identify variations in language patterns, vocabulary, and habits which interfere with efforts at cross-cultural communication. To accomplish this, students will examine communication efforts within several cultures to identify differences and to evaluate their effectiveness. Awareness of differences would not demand conformity but would explain to the student his successes or failures in various communicative situations.

C. Each school will provide advanced elective courses for oral language development. While the basic course will provide data relevant to any oral communication form, the advanced courses will provide opportunity for attention to specific forms. Therefore, options will include public speaking with attention to persuasive and informative public speaking; courses in small group problem solving and the nature of inquiry; debate and responsibilities of the advocate in parliamentary and formal deliberative situations; oral interpretation of literature and oral presentation as a measure of understanding; and drama with emphasis on technical problems, dramatic literature, and acting. Courses in mass media properly fall within the category of advanced communication study.

All such courses might not be offered by every school. Determination of which advanced courses to offer would likely depend upon the training and interests of the teachers of speech, and the needs of the students and of the communities.

### III CO-CURRICULAR

Co-curricular programs will be offered to meet the specific needs of the students to engender community pride, and to gain the benefits of inter-scholastic activity. The co-curricular program may consist of:

- A. Assembly programs within each school and community to provide for demonstration and development of abilities in oral communication.
- B. Inter-scholastic programs in debate, public speaking and interpretation through membership in the official state league, the Florida Forensics Program, and participation in other tournaments and workshops.
- C. A drama program designed for the understanding of theatre by both participants and student audiences. Such plays should be directed toward the student's development of personal aptitudes, production skills, and the audience's appreciation of dramatic literature. Fund raising as the major purpose of high school productions must be discontinued.

### IV PERSONNEL

Courses in speech and drama should be taught by individuals holding majors in speech from accredited universities and colleges. Minimum course qualifications should include fundamentals of speech, phonetics, argumentation and debate, small group discussion, interpretation, play production, acting and methods of teaching speech. Desirable preparation should include persuasive speaking, advanced interpretation, rhetorical

theory, communication theory, and directing of extra-curricular activities. Speech personnel should hold membership in one or more of the following organizations:

1. Speech Communication Association
2. Southern Speech Communication Association
3. Florida Speech Association
4. American Educational Theatre Association.

## V FACILITIES

For effective learning in the speech courses, the following facilities should be available:

- A. A large classroom with movable chairs and lectern.
- B. An auditorium and stage area with minumum equipment of six baby spots; cyclorama or other masking forms; available stools and lecterns for readers theatre productions; and storage spaces.
- C. An oral communication laboratory to include listening stations and tape equipment for two-way listening procedures.